Minutes of the eighth meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts held May 18, 1911.

MINUTES OF THE EIGHTH MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS,

HELD THURSDAY, May 18, 1911.

Copy sent to Mr. Burnham
Mr. Olmsted
Mr. Gilbert
Mr. French
Mr. Millet
Mr. Moore
Mr. Hastings

The eighth meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts was held in its Office in the Lemon Building, Washington, D. C., on Thursday, May 18, 1911. The following members were present:

Mr. Burnham, the Chairman;

Mr. Olmsted;

Mr. Hastings;

Mr. French;

Mr. Millet;

Mr. Gilbert;

Mr. Moore; also

Colonel Spencer Cosby, the Secretary and Executive Officer.

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 10:50 A. M., and immediately proceeded to the business before it.

1. The minutes of the preceding meeting in Washington, held on March 17, 1911, and of the informal meeting, held in Chicago on April 25, 1911, were presented and approved.

2. The Commission considered the requests, referred to it by the War Department, of Mr. Giuseppe Donato, Mr. Frederick C. Hibbard, and The Van Amringe Granite Company to enter the competition for a memorial monument to be erected at Fort Recovery, Ohio. The Commission recommended that Messrs. Donato and Hibbard be permitted to enter the competition, but that the Van Amringe Granite Company be

excluded, as it is a contracting company and the program of competition invites only artists to compete.

The Secretary read the letter from the Secretary of War, requesting the names of the members of the Commission who were present when the applications of Messrs. Fournier and d'Uzesti, and Miss Clyde G. Chandler, were passed on; the Secretary was directed to transmit this information to the Secretary of War.

It was also agreed that, in case further applications are referred to the Commission relative to entering the competition for the Fort Recovery monument, the Secretary is to consult with an architect and a sculptor on the Commission, who are authorized to act for the Commission in the matter of the applications. Mr. French stated that Mr. A. Lukeman, sculptor, had made application to enter the competition; the Commission instructed the Secretary that, should the application be referred to the Commission, its acceptance should be recommended.

3. The Secretary read the letter from the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, submitting an outline plan for a system of lighting proposed to be installed on Pennsylvania avenue between 15th street and the Capitol Building. After discussion, and examination of the plan, a letter containing the conclusions of the Commission was forwarded to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia. (See Exhibit A.)

4. The Secretary read a letter from Mr. F. W. Perkins, Washington, D. C., calling attention to the congested condition of 15th street opposite the Treasury building, and suggesting that an attempt be made to interest Congress in changing the building line to relieve this condition. The Secretary was directed to inform Mr. Perkins that the Commission of Fine Arts had no jurisdiction in the matter, and therefore could take no initiatory action. (See Exhibit B.)

5. The Commission examined at the Lodge House in Potomac Park the new model of the Barry monument submitted by Mr. John J. Boyle; it approved the larger (second) of the two models of the figure submitted by him, subject, however, to the pedestal's being altered so that the depth of the main portion shall be diminished, measured from front to rear, and that the splay shall also be made less. The sketch of the setting for the monument submitted by Mr. Boyle was, however, not approved, and Mr. Olmsted was authorized to consult with Mr. Boyle as to changes which are to be made.

6. Upon motion duly made and seconded it was

RESOLVED, That a vote of thanks be given to Mr. Glenn Brown for his valuable services in supervising and directing, for the Commission of Fine Arts, the hanging of the Park Commission Plans at The First Municipal City Planning Exhibition in America, now being held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The Secretary was directed to transmit a copy of these resolutions to Mr. Brown.

7. The Secretary was authorized to have two tracings made of the area on the Mall between 6th and 15th streets. The first tracing is to show the present buildings situated in that area and the location of the three new Department buildings as called for by the law; the second tracing is to be similar except that the three new Department buildings are to be placed according to the suggestion of the Commission of Fine Arts that the building for the Department of State should be on the Mall on a line with the National Museum.

8. The Commission discussed generally the arrangement and fitting of its altered quarters. It was decided not to have the partitions panelled but to cover them with a cartridge paper of neutral grey tint. The brick walls are to be painted the same color, and not plastered. The floor need not be scraped, but is to be covered with a rug.

Upon motion duly made and seconded it was resolved that Mr. Francis H. Bacon be requested to submit designs for furniture for the Commission rooms.

Mr. Millet was authorized to select the design for the furniture to be purchased for the Commission rooms, and also the color scheme in painting and papering the rooms.

9. The Secretary read the tentative report to the Lincoln Memorial Commission, prepared by Mr. Charles Moore, upon the proposed site for the Lincoln Memorial. He also submitted the following papers in connection with the Memorial:- applications of Messrs. Frank Vlaciha, Charles W. Leavitt, Jr., William Welles Bosworth, E. Van Buren Magonigle, and H. Brooks Price to enter the Lincoln Memorial competition; - letters from H. M. Warren Post #12, G. A. R. of Wakefield, Massachusetts, and Messrs. Charles J. Glidden, Alfred Reeves, W. G. Buckner, Benjamin Price, and J. M. Studebaker, urging that the Memorial take the form of a memorial road from Washington to Gettysburg; - letters from the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and The Fine Arts Federation of New York, indorsing the Potomac Park site for the Lincoln Memorial;- and a letter from Mr. Charles G. D. Walcott, suggesting that the Memorial take the form of a monumental building dedicated to art. All these were ordered filed.

The Commission then left for the inspection of the Barry model, and also of the proposed site for the Lincoln Memorial in Potomac Park, returning at about two o'clock for luncheon. After luncheon, the proposed report to the Lincoln Memorial Commission was again taken up, and each member given an opportunity to express his opinion in regard to it. The report was slightly revised and the Secretary was directed to have galley proof copies made of it and sent to each member. Every member was urged to make an immediate individual study of the question in all its phases with a view to final action at the next meeting, to be held in June. The

Commission also directed that a panoramic view be taken from a point 40 feet above mean low tide on the suggested site for the Lincoln Memorial in Potomac Park.

10. The Commission adjourned at 5 P. M., to meet again Friday, June 16, at 10 A. M.

Colonel, U. S. Army,
SECRETARY.

APPROVED:

CHAIRMAN.

May 19, 1911.

Hon. Cuno H. Rudolph,
President, Board of Commissioners
of the District of Columbia,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

At its meeting held yesterday the Commission of Fine Arts gave careful consideration to the plan presented in your letter of April 12th for a suggested system of lighting, to be installed on Pennsylvania avenue between 15th street and the Capitol building.

Members of the Commission are personally familiar with a large number of the instances, both abroad and in this country, illustrated in the paper accompanying the report on the plan, and each of the members has independently reached the opinion that in every case of long straight avenues the appearance of the streets has suffered materially from the presence of the posts in the midst of the street. Therefore, in spite of the fact that such a method of lighting has been tried in many important thoroughfares, it is believed that lamps on tall posts, with aisles of safety in connection, near the middle of the roadway, would confuse and seriously injure the appearance of Pennsylvania avenue, the most important street vista in the Capital. Another consideration, which is both practical and aesthetic, is that the presence of these posts and islands in the roadway would interfere with the best handling of parades.

By direction of the Commission:

Very respectfully,

SPENCER COSBY,

Colonel, U. S.Army,
Secretary.

SC/ABC

EXHIBIT B

74

May 19, 1911.

Mr. F. W. Perkins,
Department of Commerce and Labor,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

Mr. D. H. Burnham, Chairman of the Commission of Fine Arts, referred to that Commission, at its meeting yesterday, your letter of April 29th, calling attention to the congested condition of 15th street, opposite the Treasury, and suggesting that an attempt be made to interest Congress in changing the building line so as to relieve this condition.

Under the terms of the law constituting it, the Commission can only advise when called upon to do so by the President, a committee of Congress, or an officer charged by law with determining certain questions. It has no power to take any initiatory action and, therefore, cannot bring any matter to the attention of Congress.

Respectfully,

SPENCER COSBY,

Colonel, U. S. Army,

Secretary.

SC-ABC